

To Study the Effectiveness & Perception Towards Celebrity Endorsement Across all Customer Gender Group

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ABSTRACT

Utilizing celebrity endorsement is a prevalent strategy in marketing. Notably, celebrities are currently featured in advertising, which has been a prevailing trend. This type of advertising has great potential since it attracts customers to the VIPs. They are overwhelmed by their mundane daily routine, hence they require guidelines and positive role models. The rationale behind employing celebrity brand ambassadors in advertising is to serve as a highly effective strategy for promoting businesses and goods. In the era of data and advertising, testimonials can capture consumers' attention in marketing and enhance the perception of the marketed product. Their renown, glamour, grace, and charm are the reasons behind this. Hence, marketers are actively seeking renowned, influential, aesthetically pleasing, and optimistic testimonials to enhance a company's reputation and promote its products. Celebrity brand ambassadors play a crucial part in the marketing and reputation of a company, as well as in the lives of customers. The daily routines and behavior of celebrities and the brands they endorse influence consumers' mindsets and purchasing decisions. The objective of this study is to ascertain if celebrity endorsement is effective across all customer groups or if the perception of this marketing strategy varies based on individuals' gender. Two consumer cohorts were surveyed regarding the impact of celebrity endorsements on their purchasing decisions and product demand. Recent findings indicate that there are still discernible disparities between male and female clients in their perception of celebrity endorsement. Each individual believes that advertising holds significance and occasionally alters their preferences based on a product's promotional campaign. Women tend to have greater faith in celebrity brand endorsements and their influence on the promoted product compared to men, who are more practical and hesitant about this phenomenon.

Keywords: Celebrity endorsement, Advertising, gender, Signal strategy, Consumer, Attention, Buying decision, Brand identity, Human brands, Social media, Commitment.

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INTRODUCTION

The utilization of celebrities in advertising has emerged as a widespread occurrence in the era of information and communication. The individuals responsible for the marketing department recognized the significance of celebrity engagement in promotional activities and the impact that well-known personalities have on consumers' purchasing choices. Consequently, there is a steady rise in the number of ads featuring celebrities. Stars significantly influence ordinary individuals' behavior and can sway their product choices when they promote them. Testimonial advertisements may be executed across several channels, including television, print, electronic, and social media (Zipporah & Mberia, 2014). People who view advertisements

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featuring a famous person are more likely to focus on and talk about the positive characteristics of the celebrity. This is because people tend to watch well-known faces in advertisements longer than fresh faces (Devue *et al.*, 2009; Nistoreanu *et al.*, 2019). Here

is evidence of the prevailing influence. VIPs' presence captures customers' attention, causing them to no longer pay the necessary attention to the advertised brand (Erfgen *et al.*, 2015). Selecting the tribute is also a crucial decision for advertising. Byrne *et al.* (2003) assert that the key to achieving success in advertising is selecting someone who is popular, credible, influential, charismatic, and internationally recognized. The advertisement should be captivating to the general public and foster a stronger connection between customers and the company being promoted. In addition, they would receive guidance from celebrities to inform their purchasing preferences. It is evident that certain individuals positively perceive Celebrity Brand Ambassadors while others do not. Some individuals opt to classify this commercial category as part of the false news category. According to Tantau *et al.* (2018), this sort of advertising does not affect their purchase decisions. Additional research has substantiated the notion that individuals' conduct varies based on their generational affiliation (Popa & Pelau, 2016). The topic at hand is whether the influence of celebrity endorsement is consistent across different gender categories of customers. The subjects of this investigation consisted of two distinct groups of purchasers — males and females. The objective is to examine the contrasting responses of men and women to celebrity endorsements.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In a culture characterized by many customer choices, firms often employ advertising to distinguish their products from competitors (Tremblay and Polasky, 2002). Celebrity endorsement is a very prevalent strategy in advertising campaigns, commonly used for a wide range of products and services (Erdogan *et al.*, 2001; Mehulkumar, 2005; Doss, 2011).

A celebrity is someone who gains widespread recognition and public attention due to their notable achievements or status. Hence, employing renowned advertisers in advertising becomes very effective since they capture clients' attention by their reputation and visual representation. The individuals who are popular may be likened to human brands since they engage in branding and marketing endeavors through their performances and appearances on stage, their conduct in their personal lives, and their internet activities. The celebrity's everyday life and acts are kept secret yet publicly scrutinized. Certain behaviors can establish brand identities, which in turn enable firms to market a wide range of products through celebrity endorsement

(Holmes & Redmond, 2014).

McCracken (1989) posits that a celebrity exerts a more potent influence on an individual's purchasing behavior compared to an average person. However, he also thinks that advertising featuring celebrities is characteristic of contemporary marketing. Marketing personalities have the ability to convey promoted products according to their defined personality. This entity is advantageous to the customers.

Celebrities have a remarkable role in contemporary promotion. Nevertheless, these entities exist due to the company's existence. This type of promotion has significant potential. The alleged contributions are exceptional catalysts for a company's reputation. Therefore, people responsible for advertising are actively seeking attractive, popular, trustworthy, and successful celebrities. These features facilitate the incorporation of emotions into the use of an item. Buyers want tributes promptly because to their disillusionment with life's uncertainty, viewing them as a survival strategy to emulate and uphold. The prominent figures in this context play a crucial role in both advertising and consumers' daily lives. Exemplary persons, by their behaviour and the tools they utilise, simplify the guidance of individuals' lives and facilitate decision-making. This is the rationale for the effectiveness of tribute PR.

Stars also serve as a specialized tool for businesses. They have the potential to enhance brand awareness and generate revenue, making ads highly effective at present. In addition, VIPs offer their own expertise, resulting in a more intimate and familiar relationship between them and clients. Clients often perceive themselves as the protagonists of their own life and hence feel comfortable sharing their opinions and expressing their thoughts regarding endorsers. Occasionally, they are driven by the open individual's attitude, feelings, or behaviour (Bagozzi and Dholakia, 2002).

However, marketers persist in seeking methods to quantify and enhance their advertisements' effectiveness by examining celebrity endorsements' influence on customer behaviour. An additional strategy for advertising is to incorporate celebrities into the banner picture, since this tends to elicit quick customer attention.

By establishing a connection between a brand and a celebrity, the brand may use the celebrity's distinctive and advantageous secondary brand associations to enhance market identification, transfer favorable



associations associated to the celebrity onto the brand, and cultivate brand loyalty, and finally enhance the worth of the authorized brand (Keller, 2008).

The fans are a network of customers who actively engage with the brand and contribute to brand value growth (Schau *et al.*, 2009). In today's modern marketplace, prominent trademarks are a common feature, often becoming the representation, or emblem, of consumer products, brands, and organisations themselves. For example, in Australia, Hugh Jackman represents the brand image of Lipton Iced Tea, Nicole Kidman appears in advertisements for Nintendo DS, and George Clooney partners with John Malkovich in promoting Nespresso espresso. Brands exploit renowned and likeable celebrities' popularity to their advantage (Keller, 2008).

Celebrity endorsements result in increased commercial memory rates (O'Mahony and Meenaghan, 1997/1998) and enhance communication with potential clients by establishing linkages between clients and the promoted brand (Atkin and Block, 1983).

Celebrities function as human brands, maintaining a consistent presence both on and off stage, as well as online and offline. Whether they are engaging in public or private activities, their actions serve as marketing and branding endeavours. Their customary pursuits and values are kept confidential yet are enacted in a public setting.

In addition, renowned individuals contribute to the dismantling of cultural boundaries (Mooij, 2004), aid in the repositioning of brand and corporate images (Till and Shimp, 1998), and eventually enhance the profitability of endorsed products (Kaikati, 1987). Research has demonstrated that the disclosure of a celebrity endorsement agreement favors stock returns, making investments in renowned individuals profitable.

These actions create firm and business profiles. Human brand identities sell goods by attributing personality traits to inanimate businesses through endorsements and persuasive techniques (Holmes & Redmond, 2014).

According to Byrne *et al.* (2003), choosing a well-known, reliable, and globally recognised individual is key to a successful advertising campaign. These commodities are quite similar in terms of both price and quality. The presence of a celebrity is crucial in this context as it serves the purpose of bringing customers in closer proximity to a particular brand and providing them with the necessary impetus to make the desired purchasing choice.

According to Erdogan (1999), a celebrity is considered to be a successful endorsement based on three criteria: their attractiveness, popularity, and brand congruence. A more captivating celebrity effectively disseminates the endorsed message (Till & Busler, 2000).

Celebrities possess traits such as elegance, charisma, and an exceptional lifestyle, which sets them apart from ordinary individuals and grants them significant visibility. As stated by Friedman and Friedman (1979), a celebrity endorser is an individual who is recognised for their achievements in public domains unrelated to the product they are endorsing. These occurrences frequently impact those who are popular with a greater degree of recognition and loyalty and higher regard in comparison to other endorsers. In today's highly competitive era, where all firms strive to remain prominent in the thoughts of consumers and motivate them to buy their products, celebrity endorsement is a valuable possibility. Success may act as a trigger. The concept of "Celebrities as Brands" poses a commercial issue. The existing concept of success is inadequate for effective management. This movement is predominantly seen as a business tool that provides advantages to a corporation. The essential factor is the compatibility between celebrities and companies. The testimonials must be compatible with the marketed items. Celebrities should have a defined role in the message of an advertising, rather than being chosen randomly.

Celebrity endorsement is an expensive marketing strategy. Customers place significant emphasis on their social status, which is why this occurs. In addition, they desire to don appropriate attire, consume the appropriate cocktail, and acquire the appropriate aroma. The stars serve as a benchmark for many clients. They are actively seeking information, drawn to famous individuals, and investing time and effort to emulate them. The occurrence is due to the fact that celebrities serve as symbols and cherished figures for regular individuals, mostly because of their lifestyle and active presence on social media platforms. The topic concerns the social effect theory. An ordinary individual strives to imitate a prominent figure in order to resemble her during an identification procedure. Individuals engage in the pursuits of a prominent figure and acquire brands they promote to establish their identity.

Brands are investing more in securing celebrity endorsements. Initially, up to the year 2020, Adidas entered into a contractual arrangement with Cristiano Ronaldo, whereby they would pay him a substantial

sum of £14.2 million year. LeBron James now reigns as the dominant figure in NBA sponsorship, earning an estimated \$48 million in off-court revenue. Although there is a strong interest in popular underwriting brands, the association with a celebrity does not necessarily enhance the brands (Zhou and Whitla, 2013). Understanding the strategies that support endorsement effects remains an important goal for managers and researchers (Bergkvist and Zhou, 2016).

Research has revealed that renowned individuals possess a higher degree of persuasiveness compared to all other endorsers. The fame of celebrities endows them with a heightened capacity to influence others. When a renowned figure promotes the items, people tend to choose more favorably. However, it is crucial to maintain equilibrium between a person's fame and the product they endorse, ensuring a genuine and natural harmony rather than a contrived and coerced one.

Celebrity recognition now functions as a tool for establishing connections and building networks. An appropriately selected celebrity will attract people, capturing their attention towards a product or brand. For instance, Fergie, the singer, has demonstrated the amount of weight she has shed, maybe with the assistance of Weight Watchers (Kotler & Keller, 2008). In this scenario, the celebrity has a significant financial stake in selecting a representative from the field of advertising. The selected public figure for the business should be renowned and publicised. This will preferably fulfil the offered items or services.

The primary aim of celebrity endorsement study is on the coherence between the celebrity and the brand, which is considered the main factor for the effectiveness of such marketing communication. In this perspective, the customer is seen as someone who is not directly involved in the connection between the celebrity and the company. The endorsement's effectiveness relies on the consumer's psychological elements, such as their personality or social influences.

Superstar endorsements and social media promotions serve as a marketing framework to examine how various actors, advertisers, the media, talent managers, broadcasting networks, consumers, and celebrities themselves collaborate to collectively create individual brand identities in a collaborative effort. Therefore, these interactions provide support to the assets of the partners themselves. The emergence of online platforms represents a valuable source of social reality. These co-creation phases serve as both spontaneous and rigorous elements to generate,

reconstruct, influence, and organize personalities for social and economic goals for celebrity partners. Celebrities significantly influence consumer perceptions and preferences across several facets of popular culture and public life, in addition to promoting products and businesses.

The quantity of celebrities included in advertising has increased in recent years. A star will supplant the inferior attributes of a certain element. They significantly influence consumer behavior and serve as a driving force behind customers' purchase decisions for certain items. Testimonial advertisements can be disseminated through many channels such as internet platforms or social media (Zipporah & Mberia, 2014).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study's objective is to assess customers' impression of celebrity endorsement, considering their gender. The 12 elements pertaining to celebrity brand ambassadors encompass preconceptions regarding their participation in commercials, the extent of their effect on customer behavior, and their impact on purchasing decisions. The items were incorporated into a comprehensive survey carried out on a sample of 252 participants from the urban population from December 2023 to February 2024 in Table 1. The Cronbach Alpha value is used to determine the validity of the sample, specifically in relation to customers' impression of celebrity endorsement. The reliability analysis i.e. Cronbach Alpha rating of 0.847 indicates a substantial level of data validity in this particular example. In this study, we utilize the behavioral and perceptual variations that arise from the gender of the participants. The study was partitioned into two gender-specific cohorts: group 1 (G1) comprised of females, while group 2 (G2) encompassed males. The poll has 252 legitimate replies, with 132 women (G1) and 120 males (G2). The findings will be displayed below.

From the table given, reliability analysis was carried out, and the values are above 0.750. Hence, the internal consistency is good.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The survey results indicate that there are certain products that exhibit differences between the two gender groups, but there are also issues that demonstrate a consistent

Table 1: Reliability Statistics

<i>Cronbach's Alpha</i>	<i>Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items</i>	<i>No. of Items</i>
.804	.847	12



opinion among customers about celebrity endorsement, regardless of their gender. Out of the 12 items that were examined, 7 of them show noteworthy disparities, while the other 5 yield comparable results. The findings for these items are shown in Table 2. The most significant disparity lies in the assumption that items endorsed or used by testimonials enhance customers' image. Female individuals are more inclined to support the statement that items endorsed by testimonials enhance their beauty (MG1 = 3.2424), whilst male individuals tend to be more pragmatic and prefer to disagree with it (MG2 = 2.8833). This is also evident from celebrity endorsers providing assurance for the quality of the things they support. In this instance, the findings revealed that women perceive celebrities as more reliable endorsers of items included in ads compared to men (MG1 = 2.6667). Their level of agreement with it is rather low (MG2=2.3917). This demonstrates that male participants exhibit more receptiveness to information and possess a lower level of trust in celebrity-endorsed advertisements. Another distinction in the impression between the two customer groups can be attributed to the perceived superior quality of items endorsed by a renowned individual. The first set of consumers, specifically female respondents, believe that items included in advertisements with celebrities had superior quality compared to products featured in advertisements without testimonials from ordinary individuals (MG1=2.6667). Men are

once again less inclined to agree with this statement (MG2=2.4000). The following statement highlights the disparities in perception based on customers' gender, specifically regarding their heightened attention towards advertising featuring celebrities. Once again, women exhibit a higher level of agreement with it (MG1 = 3.0303) compared to male respondents (MG2 = 2.7083). Within the same classification, we may incorporate the notion that people frequently purchase things that are endorsed or worn by celebrities. Women seem to agree with this assertion more strongly (MG1 = 2.5606) than males (MG2 = 2.2417). The assertion that celebrities offer advantages to the items they endorse also reveals a little disparity in perception between the two genders. Female respondents (MG1 = 3.7652) are less inclined to agree with this notion than to male respondents (MG2=4.0750). One notable distinction between the mindsets of different genders is their tendency to purchase a product only based on their like for the celebrity endorsing it. Female respondents agree more with the notion that they purchase items endorsed by celebrities only if they like the testimony (MG1=2.4167), but the male group does not (MG2 = 2.2417).

Similarly the, misconceptions exists surrounding celebrity sponsorship, regardless of the gender of the consumers. This phenomenon may be observed in instances where consumers often alter their preferences in response to advertising, as evidenced by the data

Table 2: Men and women perception towards celebrity endorsement

<i>Particulars</i>	<i>Mean G1 (Women)</i>	<i>Mean G2 (Men)</i>
I frequently purchase things that are endorsed or endorsed by celebrities. I prioritise advertising that include celebrities.	2.5606	2.2417
In my opinion, the things endorsed by celebrities exhibit superior quality.	3.0303	2.7083
I believe that the items endorsed by celebrities enhance my public perception.	2.6667	2.4000
Celebrities provide an assurance of the excellence of the things they endorse.	3.2424	2.8833
I believe that the things endorsed by celebrities are high-end luxury items.	2.6667	2.3917
I feel that wearing things endorsed by celebrities may enhance my social standing.	2.7955	2.9333
However, I only purchase products pushed by a celebrity if I genuinely admire them.	2.2955	2.1250
I am of the opinion that celebrities contribute positively to the reputation and desirability of the products they endorse.	2.4167	2.2417
I am of the opinion that celebrities contribute positively to the reputation and desirability of the products they endorse.	3.7652	4.0750
I am of the opinion that celebrities contribute positively to the reputation and desirability of the products they endorse.	4.4545	4.4167
Consumers have a tendency to idolise and imitate specific prominent figures.	5.0379	5.1250
Consumers frequently alter their choices based on advertisement.	4.7273	4.7500

Observation: G1 women; G2 men
 Source: Own research results

(MG1=4.7273, MG2=4.7500). Both parties concur with this concept. Both groups highly agree that consumers have a tendency to idolize and imitate certain prominent individuals (MG1=5.0379, MG2=5.1250). Both sets of respondents share the impression that a testimonial might negatively influence the image of the marketed product. This perspective is reflected in the mean scores of MG1=4.4545 and MG2=4.4167. Furthermore, it is evident that both males and females do not perceive the items endorsed by celebrities as being luxurious (MG1=2.7955, G2=2.9333). The last assertion that demonstrates a shared perspective according on the gender of the respondents is that things endorsed or worn by testimonials enhance their social image. This appears to be of lesser significance not only for men but also for women. Both individuals express their dissent over the notion that wearing or endorsing a product by a celebrity will enhance their social standing in contemporary culture (MG1=2.2955, MG2=2.1250).

CONCLUSION

The finding of the result suggests that customer perception of celebrity endorsement varies according on gender, with both variances and similarities seen. Regarding disparities, it was shown that women are more likely to place more trust in testimonies from ads than males.

Women perceive that a product endorsed by a well-known individual will enhance their image. They believe that celebrity endorsers vouch for the quality of the products they promote. Female respondents also acknowledge that products featured in commercials with celebrities are of superior quality compared to those without testimonials. They exhibit greater attentiveness to commercials featuring celebrities and frequently purchase products worn or advertised by these famous individuals. In contrast, males tend to have a greater inclination towards realism. They generally hold the view that a celebrity endorsement does not necessarily indicate a higher quality product or a better image. They do not give more importance to a commercial simply because it includes a testimonial, nor do they purchase products solely because a charismatic and well-known individual advertises them.

Both men and women exhibit comparable thought patterns in some circumstances. Both individuals acknowledge that their choices frequently shift in response to advertising and are aware of the tendency for consumers to idolize and imitate specific prominent personalities. All individuals acknowledge that a

testimonial can sometimes have an adverse effect on the perception of the endorsed product and do not concur with the notion that things endorsed by celebrities are inherently luxurious. All individuals acknowledge that the items endorsed or utilized by testimonials will not enhance their social standing. This appears to be of lesser significance not only for men but also for women. Both individuals refute the claim that wearing or endorsing a product through a testimonial will enhance their image in contemporary culture. It appears that celebrity endorsements more influence women than to males. One explanation for this is that males tend to be more pragmatic, reserved, and less influenced by advertisements. Having a desired product on their wish list allows individuals to allocate more time towards researching and gathering knowledge about it, eliminating the need for promotion by a celebrity brand ambassador.

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